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THE SITUATION IN AFGHANISTAN AND
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PEACE AND SECURITY

SECURITY COUNCIL
Fifty-third year

Identical letters dated 23 November 1998 from the Permanent Representative of Afghanistan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to forward herewith a letter dated 23 November 1998 addressed to you from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic State of Afghanistan.

I should be grateful if you would have the text of the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the General Assembly under agenda item 45 and of the Security Council.

(Signed) A. G. Ravan FARHÂDI
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

ANNEX

Letter dated 23 November 1998 from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Afghanistan addressed to the Secretary-General

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic State of Afghanistan presents its compliments to the Secretary-General and has the honour to communicate the following.

The Taliban mercenary group, directly aided by Pakistani military personnel, including many Punjâbi Taliban, are continuing their systematic and planned ethnic cleansing, killing, arbitrary detention, summary execution and persecution of civilians in northern Afghanistan since occupying those territories in June 1998. According to reliable information received, at least 20,000 people have been subjected to such treatment.

In the northern Provinces of Faryâb, Jowzjân, Balkh, Takhâr, Samangân and Kunduz and the central Province of Bâmyân, thousands of civilians have been taken hostage and imprisoned in premises resembling concentration camps that have recently been opened of Mazâr-e-Sharif, Kunduz and Jowzjân. Previously, detention centres had been in existence for the past two years at Kabul, Ghazni, Kandahar and Herât, where civilians have been detained on the basis of their ethnic origins.

Civilian populations have been subjected to atrocious conditions of life due to their ethnic origins and beliefs that do not conform to Taliban tenets, without the observation of the minimum conditions of humane treatment required by a civilized society.

As a result of such oppressive and tyrannical conduct on the part of the Taliban, deaths are on the rise, as prisoners are beaten, tortured, exposed to malnutrition and deprived of medical treatment. So far, at least 176 prisoners have been confirmed dead.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic State of Afghanistan earnestly appeals to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the Commission on Human Rights, the International Committee of the Red Cross and the Security Council to promptly send a fact-finding mission to visit the concentration camps established by the Taliban and report upon its return to the Security Council, which would hopefully lead to the prosecution and punishment of the perpetrators of the heinous crimes committed. However, any investigation must include an inquiry into the involvement of the politico-military mafia of Pakistan that has incited, encouraged, aided and assisted the Taliban mercenary group in this context.